BENGALURU, FRIDAY, JANUARY 31, 2025 www.Bangaloremirror.com 12 Pages PRICE ₹3

Bangalore Mirror

TEMP Max 27 | Min 18 | Humidity 90% Generally cloudy sky with Light rain Sensex 76,759 | Nifty 23,249 | Gold 83,020 | Silver 98,500 | Dollar 86.60 | Euro 90.11 | GBP 103.33

Lights off

CITY PAGE 4

Streetlights in Nagarjuna Layout disconnected as bills of over 5 years remain unpaid, while in Kithaganur fused bulbs not replaced

Loan wolves

CITY PAGE 7

Cabinet proposes ordinance for stricter guidelines and city police gear up to curb ruthless microfinance menace

Proposal submitted for reintroduction of towing at 75 junctions signals city may see return of this practice reviled and dreaded by vehicle owners. Could this be the only way to crack down on haphazard parking?

LOCK, STOCK & TOW SMOKING BARRELS

Home Minister confirms police department is reviewing option

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There's growing speculation about the potential return of towing operations in Bengaluru, as Home Minister Dr G Parameshwara confirmed that the police department is reviewing the reimplementation of towing for vehicles parked in restricted areas. He stated, "Discussions are ongoing regarding the re-implementation of towing in selected areas of the city. The department is currently reviewing the matter."

Additionally, a proposal has already been submitted to the minister for the reintroduction of towing at 75 junctions across 22 high-density corridors. Yelahanka MLA SR Vishwanath had previously urged the government to restart towing operations, citing concerns about haphazard parking due to a lack of deterrence.

Challenges and controversies

The idea of reviving towing has sparked debates, with senior police officials suggesting that it may be better for the police to manage towing operations directly rather than outsourcing it to contractors. In previous years, substantial revenue was generated from towing fines, with Rs 7.43 crore collected in 2019 alone, a significant portion of which was paid to private contractors.

However, there have been numerous complaints about towing, including allegations of rude behavior by personnel and damage to towed vehicles.

In February 2022, towing

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6 »

> **Hired towing personnel were often rude, and instances of vehicle damage with no compensation were reported. Also, there were no clear warnings before towing actions were taken**
> —Surendra Gowda, JC Nagar resident

TRAFFICKED

Police dismantle human trafficking networks in city over last week, rescue women forced into sex work

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A series of coordinated raids by the Central Crime Branch (CCB) Women Protection Squad has dismantled multiple human trafficking networks across Bengaluru, rescuing several women, including foreign nationals, who had been forced into prostitution. Investigations revealed that some of these women had entered the country on tourist visas without valid passports, while others had crossed borders illegally and were residing in Bengaluru with valid IDs. These aspects remain under investigation.

Between January 16 and January 25, four special teams conducted operations across different locations in the city, rescuing 10 women. Some of these women were found in possession of valid Indian identification documents, posing a significant challenge for officials in distinguishing legal residents from those using fraudulent identities. The raids also led to the discovery of illegal immigrants and fake documentation rackets.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6 »

THINGS TO DO

01 Magnificent prints

Bengaluru Print Exchange International (BPEI) 2024 show features 64 printmakers across the globe (29 international & 35 national). This event is held every year to celebrate the finesse and diversity of printmaking as an art form.
Where: Lavaru Art Gallery, Nisarga Layout
When: Until February 5, 10 am to 6 pm

02 Fun learning

Pardon My French brings a screening of the cinematic adaptation of Timothee de Fombelle's 'Toby Lolness,' which has been made into a mini-series & a conversation with children's author Bijal Vachharajani on the alchemical magic that goes into creating new worlds in literature.
Where: Atta Galatta, Indiranagar;
When: February 1, 6:30 pm

03 Stunning acts

The Platform 2025 will feature mesmerising solo performances by two exceptional international artists, Sooraj Subramanian in "Reflections of an Indian Dancer" and January Low in "Pending."
Where: Medai – The Stage, Bengaluru
When: February 1, 6:30 pm

04 Into sci-fi world

SB Divya and Shalini Srinivasan will be conversing about science fiction writing as they discuss Divya's latest book, LOKA, and her work as an acclaimed writer of science fiction and fantasy. **Where: Champaca Bookstore**
When: February 1, 6 pm

05 Refreshing sessions

Contemporary dance workshop for beginners & movement workshop for parents & guardians: Experience the joy of movement. The sessions will seek to make movement vocabularies accessible through various techniques. **Where: Attakkalari Centre for Movement Arts, Wilson Garden; When: February 1, 4–5 pm & 5–6 pm, respectively**

'Two big cats to remain in lifetime captivity at BBP'

It's unsafe to release captive big cats back into wild: Officials await forensic reports to identify leopard 2 months post-attack near Shivaganga forest

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Leopards caught by the Karnataka Forest Department (KFD) near Shivaganga forest in Nelamangala taluk in November last year will be spending life in captivity. These leopards are housed at Bannerghatta Biological Park (BBP) in open enclosures and have been hand-fed by keepers since then.

According to KFD officials, two out of the five big cats captured after a 56-year-old woman died in a leopard attack in the area on November 17, 2024, have been in captivity for more than two months, and releasing them in the wild will be dangerous due to human imprint. "By now, the leopards have become used to human interaction. When animals interact with humans for such a long period, they lose fear of human beings and become unfit to be released in the wild. Thus the leopards will be at BBP hereafter," said a senior KFD official.

Forensic analysis and training

To zero in on the leopard involved in the incidents, samples for the analysis were sent to the National Centre for Biological Sciences (NCBS). However, more than two months have passed, but the reports are yet to arrive. "The report would have arrived in 48 hours if the forest department had a dedicated lab for wildlife forensic cases. Currently, we have to be dependent on NCBS, as it is being done pro bono. Moreover, while we collected hair samples from the kill area, it is proving difficult to pinpoint the leopard involved in the accident. The reason being that we probably could not collect samples properly from the victim's body due to various reasons, including lack of training of field staff. While saliva samples from the victim's body were collected, it did not yield any DNA," said the official.

This leopard sighted in the Nelamangala taluk was caught by the forest officials in November, 2024

2 of 5 captured leopards were in captivity for more than 2 months; they are used to human interaction by now

Wildlife activists and experts say the forest department must ensure that the wildlife forensic sciences laboratory in Bengaluru is functional sooner than later. "The scene was contaminated even before the samples could be collected by the department. A big crowd gathered as the area was not cordoned off by the officials. We need to standardise these techniques of sample and evidence collection. Currently, the field staff is not well versed in these aspects," said a city-based conservationist.

Moreover, collecting forensic evidence in case of wildlife-related crime requires training for field staff, which is lacking. "We have started training field staff in wildlife forensic cases. We have already trained six people; two were sent to Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun, and four took training in wildlife forensic science in Tamil Nadu. The officers trained are deputy Range Forest Officers and RFOs. We are building up a team of experts to handle such cases with efficiency in the future," said SK Malkhede, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (wildlife) and Chief Wildlife Warden of Karnataka.

State's first wildlife forensic science lab to be ready soon

Karnataka's first wildlife forensic science lab in Bengaluru, a Rs 2.7 crore project, is expected to be ready in three months, says KFD. The laboratory was approved a couple of years ago and is being set up to improve the conviction rate in wildlife crime cases. Once operational, the facility, equipped with modern techniques and equipment, will provide analysis and reports to aid investigations, including DNA analysis and morphological analysis. "We are in the process of collecting reference samples from the wild. We are also working positively towards creating a tie-up with the police department, and agreements have already been signed between both departments. It will be ready in three months," Malkhede added.

Special kids to shine in Appu Sports Meet today

Over 300 national and international experts have gathered to discuss advancements in rehabilitation medicine at the 53rd Annual Conference of the Indian Association of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (IAPMRCON 2025). Themed "Breaking Barriers, Building Bridges: Advancing Rehabilitation for All," the conference focused on making rehabilitation services more accessible and affordable in India. HAround 500 specially-abled children from 18 schools will participate in 'Appu Sports Meet' at Malleswaram Playground on Friday. The sports meet is being organised by Youth of Malleswaram and Sri Kadumalleswara Gelayara Balaga. The sports meet will be held from 9 am to 4 pm and will be inaugurated by Ashwini Puneeth Rajkumar.

"Some children are born with disabilities due to some reasons, including genetic and environmental factors. Specially-abled children need our support and care to lead lives on par with normal people. We are organising the sports meet to encourage and motivate specially-abled children in memory of late Puneeth Rajkumar," said BT Chandramouli, founder of Youths of Malleswaram. Vallabha, a social worker, said, "Specially-abled children should have all amenities and opportunities. Let us encourage and motivate these kids to showcase their talent." The children will participate in running races, shot put, musical chairs, and other sports. Winners will be awarded with a championship trophy and cash prizes. A team of doctors and an ambulance vehicle are available at the venue.

Launch of T-shirt and logo of Appu Sports Meet on Thursday

— Y Maheswara Reddy

Experts stress on need for accessible rehabilitation services

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Hosted by the Department of Neurological Rehabilitation at NIMHANS and the Karnataka Chapter of IAPMR (KARM), IAPMRCON 2025 was inaugurated on Thursday (January 30) at the NIMHANS Convention Centre. Dr BN Gangadhar, Chairperson of the National Medical Commission (NMC), stressed the need for a multi-disciplinary approach and wider availability of rehabilitation.

Dr Pratima Murthy, Director of NIMHANS, highlighted the importance of telerehabilitation and integrating mental health into rehabilitation services to ensure holistic treatment for persons with disabilities. She added that collaboration between specialities is key to advancing rehabilitation outcomes in India.

The event features lectures, research presentations, and workshops on advanced rehabilitation techniques and technology. Experts stressed the need for more trained professionals and policy-driven solutions to improve rehabilitation services for India's growing disabled population.

— BMB

Man found dead at home; his family alleges harassment by local businessman

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A 30-year-old man was found dead under suspicious circumstances on January 24 at his residence in Prakash Nagar. The deceased was identified as Arun. It is said that Arun had been allegedly harassed by a local businessman, Dinesh, over a loan. He was discovered hanging in his home by his mother, Girija, who broke into the locked house with the help of neighbours.

The deceased's family has filed a complaint, calling for legal action against Dinesh, alleging that the harassment by Dinesh may have led to Arun's tragic death. According to the complaint filed by Arun's father, the family had lived in their own house in the area for nearly 20 years. Arun, who ran a workshop, had borrowed money from Dinesh, the owner of

Pooja Enterprises located on 7th Cross Road, Prakash Nagar. The family claims that Arun had paid Rs 1.5 lakh to Dinesh but was subjected to threats and harassment after failing to repay the remaining balance.

Around two weeks ago, Dinesh allegedly slapped Arun and threatened his life, demanding the rest of the money. Arun confided in his wife, Nandini, and mentioned that Dinesh had intimidated him with dire consequences if the payment was not made soon. On the evening of January 23, Arun reportedly visited his brother Dilip Kumar's house in Kengeri, bringing his wife and two children along. He returned home around 10:45 pm. The next morning, when Arun's mother went to check on him, she found the door to his house locked from the inside. After calling for help, the neighbours assisted in breaking open the door, only to find Arun's lifeless body hanging from a hook in the ceiling.

The police are investigating the case, with further enquiries underway to determine the exact cause of Arun's death.

(If you or someone you know is having suicidal tendencies, help is always at hand: please call Arogya Sahayavani at 104 or AASRA at +919820466726).

IN CITY

19-year-old discovered dead at under-construction building

A 19-year-old man was discovered dead on Thursday at an under-construction building in Doddanekkundi, Mahadevapura. The deceased, identified as Prakash, was a food delivery agent and a resident of Mahadevapura. According to police, he informed his father around 7.30 pm the previous day that he was going out but never returned. Investigations suggest that Prakash went to the under-construction site, where he reportedly jumped to his death. The Mahadevapura police have registered an Unnatural Death Report (UDR) and are awaiting the post-mortem report to confirm the cause of death and rule out any foul play. Authorities are also examining his call records and reviewing CCTV footage from the area to gather more information. **–BMB**

SSLC student dies by suicide

A 15-year-old SSLC student died by suicide at her residence in Srinagar, Hanumantha Nagar, on Thursday. The deceased, identified as Bhumika, was found dead in her room. According to the police, Bhumika's parents had yelled at her the previous day, advising her to focus on her studies ahead of her upcoming preparatory exams. Upset over this, she had locked herself in her room. When she did not open the door the next morning, her parents checked through the window and found her dead. The exact reason behind Bhumika's suicide is yet to be determined. The Hanumantha Nagar police have registered a case and launched an investigation. **–BMB**

₹3,200-crore GST deception exposed

GST Intelligence officials bust fake invoice scam involving 15 shell companies, detain 2 suspects, search is on for accomplice

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The Directorate General of GST Intelligence (DGGI), Bengaluru Zonal Unit, on Wednesday uncovered a staggering Rs 3,200 crore fake invoice scam following extensive searches conducted at 30 locations in Bengaluru and Mumbai. The investigation, carried out on January 29, has led to the detention of two suspects so far, with a manhunt underway for a third accomplice.

According to officials, the accused orchestrated the scam through a web of 15 shell companies, which existed only on paper. These entities had physical addresses, registered directors, and appeared legitimate but had no real business operations. "These companies claimed to have received goods worth hundreds of crores but were merely generating invoices for services such as IT support, management consultancy, and advertising. The presence of numerous inward e-way bills, without any corresponding outward e-way bills, raised suspicions," an official revealed.

A dual-layered scam

Investigators have identified two main facets of the fraudulent scheme. First, a Rs 665 crore scam involving fake input tax credits (ITC), wherein the companies falsely claimed tax refunds without conducting actual business. Second, a broader Rs 3,200 crore fake invoice scam, where the accused manipulated financial records to inflate turnover and deceive stakeholders.

Stock market manipulation

Adding another layer to the fraud, nine out of the 15 fake firms were listed on Indian stock exchanges. Authorities discovered that the promoters engaged in circular trading—issuing invoices among themselves and obtaining fake invoices from other companies, including

FMCG firms—to artificially inflate turnover. "A higher turnover allowed them to secure loans from banks and boost their stock value. Once the company was listed and share prices rose, the promoters cashed out by selling their stakes at inflated prices, leaving common investors to suffer losses," explained a tax official.

Further examination revealed that multiple firms had filed GST returns from the same IP addresses, indicating centralised control. Authorities also discovered that the directors of these companies were merely figureheads, while chartered accountants failed to conduct proper audits.

These companies have been operating for nearly eight years. Initially, promoters held about 60% of the company shares, but over time, they reduced their stakes to below 10%. By the time the scam came to light, the public owned almost 100% of these firms, meaning the promoters had already syphoned off their profits.

Probe & recovery underway

As the investigation deepens, authorities are working to identify all individuals involved and recover the fraudulent ITC claims. Officials stated, "This is a massive scam, and we are committed to taking strict action against those responsible. No fraudulent entity will be spared, and necessary legal proceedings will be pursued against all culprits."

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Nagarjuna Layout goes dark: Who forgot to pay the bill?

Streetlights in Nagarjuna Layout are disconnected due to over five years of unpaid bills, leaving residents without lighting; issue hinges on transfer of responsibility for maintenance and payment

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For those who have purchased sites and built their dream homes in private layouts, it is important to verify all relevant documents. Even if the layout has been approved by the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) and property owners have been paying taxes for years, one key aspect to check is whether the developer has cleared electricity charges for streetlights or if their maintenance has been officially transferred to BBMP authorities.

Residents of Nagarjuna Layout near Seegehalli in Bengaluru East had no issues with streetlights until Wednesday. For the past five years, the streetlights remained operational. However, they were taken by surprise when Bengaluru Electricity Supply Company (Bescom) authorities disconnected the power supply to the streetlights in the layout.

"We have no other option than disconnecting electricity to the street lights at the layout as no one (the builder or residents or the BBMP) paid the dues for more than five years. We have advised the residents to clear the dues as they did not hand over the street lights to the BBMP. They have to clear around Rs 15 lakh towards electricity bill dues from the date of service," said Bescom Assistant Executive Engineer.

He said that he has been advising the residents for the last three months to clear the electricity bill dues of street lights but nothing has been done to date.

Meanwhile, residents of Nagarjuna Layout have demanded the authorities concerned take immediate measures to restore the electricity for the street lights as it would be difficult and unsafe for them to go home or come out of their homes during the night. "There is no street light outage at the other layouts where property owners are not paying property tax. We have been paying property tax all these years but now we have to reside here without street lights. I appeal to the authorities to restore electricity to the street lights without any delay," said a resident.

> **"We have been paying property tax all these years but now we have to reside without streetlights. I appeal to restore electricity** – Resident

Coming down heavily on the Bengaluru Electricity Supply Company (bescom) authorities for disconnecting the electricity to the street lights, the President of Nagarjuna Layout Site Owners and Residents Association, L Anandappa said that residents have been facing a lot of problems due to no supply of electricity to the street lights. "80 site owners among 130 have constructed buildings. All of them have been paying the property tax promptly. Since we have been paying the property tax, we assumed that the BBMP would pay the electricity of the street lights," said Anandappa. However, the BBMP Executive Engineer stated that the builder or residents had not transferred the streetlights to the BBMP. "It is their responsibility to hand over the streetlights to the BBMP. The BBMP is responsible for paying the electricity bill for streetlights in approved layouts, but only if they have been officially handed over," the Executive Engineer said.

Whether streetlights will remain in the Nagarjuna Layout depends on the decision of BBMP and Bescom.

Darkness in Kithaganur: Residents fear burglary surge

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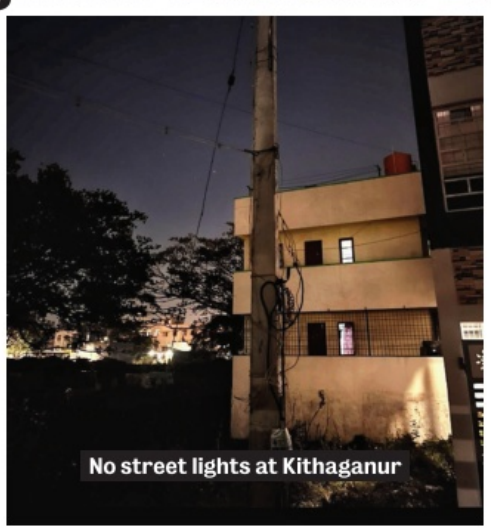
Residents of Kithaganur and nearby areas are urging the Kithaganur Panchayat to replace burnt-out bulbs and install streetlights in areas lacking proper illumination. They expressed concerns that the darkness is aiding thieves in breaking into homes. The residents said that Panchayat authorities have failed to redress their grievances. "I have been residing here for three years. There are no lights on the road that leads to our layout. A burglary took place near our layout last year. I have informed the authorities concerned and also raised the issue on social media. I hope the authorities fix this problem as early as possible," said Raj Prakash Deepak, a resident of Happy Gardens Layout.

Expressing disappointment over the failure of the authorities in replacing fused bulbs, a resident, on the condition of anonymity, said that he is tired of visiting the Panchayat Office seeking replacement. "The Panchayat officials have assured to fix the problem all these years but have done nothing to date. I urge the Panchayat officials to not only replace fused bulbs but also replace damaged electric poles to avoid accidents in future," the resident said.



No street lights at Kithaganur

Subramani, a resident of Happy Gardens Layout, said that it has become tough for the residents to venture out of their homes due to darkness. "I approached Panchayat officials requesting them to provide street lights. They sent an electrician to our layout. The electrician told me that he cannot fix the street light here as it is a private layout. I requested him to fix the street light on humanitarian grounds, but my appeal went unanswered," said Subramani.

VP Krishna, founder of KR Puram Constituency Association Welfare Federation, said that he has escalated the streetlight issue to the Kithaganur Panchayat Executive Officer. "We have submitted a list of 200 complaints from the residents of Kithaganur and surrounding areas. Many residents have complained that lack of street lights has become an advantage for thieves to break into houses. The roads are full of potholes and craters. Garbage is being burnt on the road and in vacant places. I want Kithaganur Panchayat officials to attend to the problems of residents without any delay," said VP Krishna. Meanwhile, the Kithaganur Panchayat Development Officer said that measures were taken to provide street lights and clear garbage. "I want the residents to visit the Panchayat Office to lodge their complaints," the Panchayat Development Officer said.

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Trash pile-up

RT Nagar

Garbage is being dumped openly along the road near the milk booth and citizens' park at RT Nagar, 12th Cross, 1st Block. The road has become one of the most neglected and unsightly in the area.

Urgent repairs

Tannery Road

Venkateshpuram, Tannery Road, is in poor condition. Authorities must prioritise road repair.

Unrepaired road

Horamavu

The BBMP road at Horamavu 1st Cross, near the water tank, has been encroached upon with stones. The cement road was damaged and remains unrepaired, with authorities yet to take action to restore it.

Accountant was siphoning funds to feed betting need

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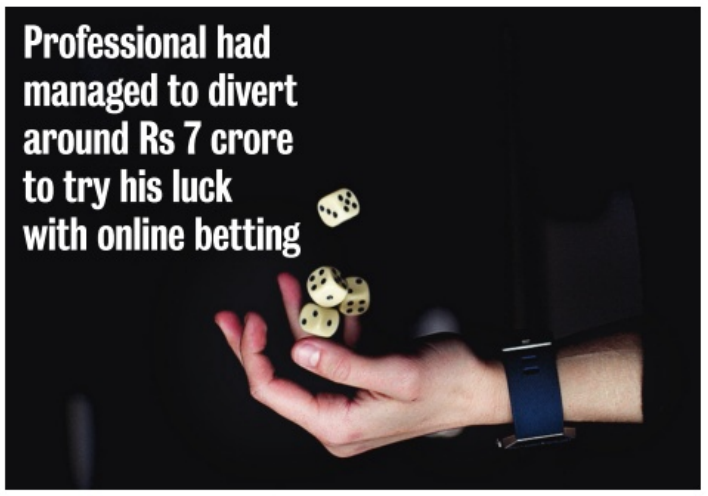
Ashoknagar police arrested a 23-year-old accountant for allegedly embezzling ₹7 crore from his company to fund his online betting addiction.

According to police reports, Srikanth, an associate accountant at a international professional services firm, was responsible for handling financial transactions of all India Swiggy offices, including payments for Swiggy Food Delivery Company, for which Swiggy regularly transferred Rs 1-2 crore per month to the firm to cover its electricity bills on the company credit card. Instead of processing these payments, Srikanth allegedly siphoned off the funds between June and December last year, hoping to make a fortune through online betting.

The fraud came to light during an internal audit conducted by Swiggy, which flagged discrepancies in the financial records amounting to Rs 7 crore. Upon further investigation, the company discovered that the funds had been redirected into a betting app instead of their intended destination. A formal complaint was subsequently lodged, by an official at the accounting firm, leading to Srikanth's arrest.



Police officials are now probing further. "We have received information about the loss of money through betting and are investigating the matter further. The betting company involved is also under scrutiny," said a senior police officer.

Online betting has been a growing concern in India, with numerous cases surfacing where individuals, driven by greed or addiction, end up in legal trouble. Srikanth's case adds another cautionary tale to the growing list, highlighting the perils of unchecked gambling habits.

As the investigation progresses, officials are working to determine whether any of the funds can be recovered. Meanwhile, Srikanth remains in police custody, facing charges of fraud and financial misappropriation.

With the rise of digital payment platforms and easy access to online betting applications, experts warn that cases like these may only increase. "Many young professionals are lured by the promise of quick money, but they fail to see the long-term consequences of their actions," said a police official.

> **"We have received information about the loss of money... The betting company is also under scrutiny** –Police official

DCP Central Shekhar H Tekkannavar said, "Online gambling is increasingly becoming a major concern in the city. Initially, individuals may start by investing small amounts, but over time, they often get drawn into betting larger sums, sometimes reaching lakhs of rupees. The addiction grows as they chase losses, and before they know it, they've invested far more than they initially intended. What's more alarming is that there are numerous gambling apps operating in the market, many of which are designed to lure users in with promises of easy money. It's crucial that the public remains aware of these risks and such apps. Awareness and caution are key to preventing such dangerous habits from taking root."

Green signal to satellite town plan

In a bid to decongest Bengaluru, the State Cabinet approved a plan for developing satellite towns connected by road and rail to Bengaluru. The towns of Devanahalli, Nelamangala, Hoskote, Doddaballapur, and Magadi are set to be developed under this plan. Briefing the media after the Cabinet meet on Thursday, Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister HK Patil said, "Under the Greater Bengaluru Development Authority (GBDA), the Ramnagar district including areas like Bidadi Hobli, Byramangala, Bannigiri, Hosur, Kempaiah Palya, and Harohalli Hobli, will be developed as part of the "Greater Bengaluru Suburban Project."

Patil said that as per the 2024-25 state budget para 270, the government has announced the development of towns surrounding Bengaluru, including Devanahalli, Nelamangala, Hoskote, Doddaballapur, and Bidadi. These will be transformed into attractive urban areas with strong road and rail connectivity, creating new employment opportunities. According to government notification the Bidadi Smart City project will be integrated into the Greater Bengaluru development scheme, making it a key focus area for urban growth.

Land acquisition

He said that in line with the new plan, around 6,023 acres of land in the areas of Bidadi, Byramangala, Bannigeri, Hosur, KG Kanchugaranahalli, Aralalusandra, Kempayyanapalya, and Harohalli will be acquired and developed. This land will be part of a larger area of 8,943 acres, with significant portions earmarked for public purposes, such as hamlet settlements, water bodies, and public parks. —BMB

Advertorial Promotional Feature

BM Food & Night Life

How to have a light-on-your-toes lunch

It's early in the week and you're already drowning under the pile of work that's been steadily rising since Monday morning. So you think of softening the blow by indulging in your favourite comfort foods at lunch.

We give you 5 pointers on how to have a meal that's both light on the stomach as well as satiating:

1. No Nasties

Avoid refined and processed foods that will only leave you groaning and dozing at your desk the rest of the day. So no refined white flour, sugar, or potatoes. Yes, they're delicious. Yes, they're convenient. Yes, you love them... but all they will do is spike your blood sugar levels and bring your energy crashing down, only to leave you hungry and craving for more.

2. Protein power

Lean protein is really good for you so you can happily reach out for eggs, chicken, tofu, pulses and legumes. Protein-rich foods not only energize you but also take longer to digest, so you stay fuller longer.

3. Befriend that fibre

We can't stress this enough - Make fibre your BFF. It helps with controlling blood sugar as it slows down the absorption of carbohydrates as well sugar in your body. Besides, all the roughage it provides will leave you feeling grateful the morning after. So eat your veggies and salads, and eat them in larger portions.

4. Portion control

This one is a no-brainer but needs to be mentioned. Eat smaller portions at lunch to avoid keeling over even before the clock strikes 3. A small salad, a portion of veggies, some rice or rotis, and a bowl of dal is more than enough to keep you going until snack time.

5. Begin sweet

We recommend avoiding sweets after lunch because they could just leave you craving more after a short while. But if you must indulge your sweet tooth and can't resist a little pick-me-up in the middle of the day, then eat them before your meal and not after.

—Femina

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Kaluve vanishes as lake dies slow death

Yelahanka residents call for urgent action to address encroachment, sewage pollution, urging authorities to implement restoration plan to protect ecosystem

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BM STANDS FOR CITY OF LAKES

Untreated sewage flows into Avalahalli Lake, polluting its waters and endangering aquatic life

Residents of Yelahanka have raised alarm over the deteriorating condition of Avalahalli Lake, which has been plagued by encroachment, sewage pollution, and the mysterious disappearance of its historic Kaluve. In a formal complaint addressed to the Tahsildar of Bengaluru North (Addl) Taluk, they demanded urgent intervention from the authorities.

The letter submitted early January, highlighted multiple concerns that threaten the survival of the lake and its surrounding ecosystem. Residents claim that the Kaluve, which once connected Krishnaraja Sagara Lake to Avalahalli Lake, has vanished, disrupting the natural flow of water and accelerating the lake's degradation.

The missing Kaluve has also led to widespread encroachments, with several illegal constructions obstructing the waterway. "Unchecked encroachments have not only blocked the water flow but have also put the entire ecosystem in danger," said Selvarajan, an environmental activist from Yelahanka.

Adding to the woes, untreated sewage is being discharged into the lake, turning its waters toxic and threatening aquatic life. "This has become a serious health hazard for the surrounding communities. The lake is being treated as a sewage dump," Selvarajan added.

This is not the first time the issue has been brought to the authorities' attention. Residents had previously written to the Revenue Minister on October 29, 2023, and again to the concerned departments in August 2024 urging action based on the Avalahalli Rajakaluve survey report from February 2024. However, despite these efforts, no significant progress has been made.

Avalahalli Lake, located in Yelahanka, is owned by Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), but its maintenance falls under Singanayakkanahalli. This is due to the lake being outside BBMP's jurisdiction. While BBMP provides the necessary funding, the Panchayat office is responsible for its implementation. "The adjacent land ownership of the layouts in the south and west areas is mostly under BDA (Bangalore Development Authority). This makes our job more complicated. The sewage from nearby Avalahalli village, MS Ramaiah NE County, BEL layout, and Sunshine colony are reaching the lake untreated. The sewage water is directed towards the rajakaluve which dumps the grey water into the lake. The ancient Rajakaluve connecting the Krishna Sagara Lake in the upper area with Avalahalli in the lower area has almost disappeared due to encroachment," added Selvarajan.

Green Circle raised the issue with Revenue Minister Krishna Baire Gowda, who directed the Yelahanka Tahsildar to survey and restore the Kaluve. The survey was completed, and the Kaluve was re-marked. The Panchayat Development Officer (PDO) of Singanayakanahalli began digging the 1 km Kaluve at our request. "But when the digging of Kaluve was halfway through, four residents wanted the Kaluve to be re-routed as their properties fell under the surveyed Kaluve. The work is stopped now and several new constructions have come up violating the buffer area of the Kaluve. If the constructions continue, one day the kaluve will be replaced by sewers only," he added.

Residents have outlined four key demands for Avalahalli Lake: investigating the loss of the historic Kaluve, removing illegal encroachments, improving sewage control to reduce pollution, and implementing a rejuvenation plan that includes desilting, invasive species removal, and ecological restoration.

"This is not just about one lake, but it is about the entire network of water bodies that sustain Bengaluru. The government must act now before it is too late." Selvarajan added.

Recently, the BBMP urged the Panchayat to address sewage flowing into the lake, which is depleting its resources. The Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB) also wrote to the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB), highlighting that the lake is in the D-category and calling for measures to clean the accumulated sewage.

Foreign nationals found to have Indian ID papers

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Prostitution rackets

Acting on a tip-off, the CCB Women Protection Squad raided a luxury hotel near KR Puram on January 20, uncovering a high-profile prostitution ring. Three individuals were operating the illegal enterprise, exploiting women from other states and foreign nationals. The operation led to the rescue of five women, including one foreign national. The accused have been booked at KR Puram Police Station.

In a separate operation on January 18, the CCB raided an apartment within Sampigehalli police station limits. Investigations revealed that traffickers had rented a third-floor flat, using it as a front for an illegal prostitution racket. Women were lured from foreign countries and various Indian states under false promises of lucrative jobs. Two women, including a foreign national, were rescued, and the illegal operation was shut down.

On January 25, another case of human trafficking surfaced in Srinagar, under Hanumanth Nagar police station limits. Acting on intelligence, the CCB raided a residence where a foreign national was being forced into prostitution. The accused, responsible for coercing the victim into sex work for financial gain, has been apprehended, and the case has been transferred to Hanumanth Nagar Police Station.

Fake documentation

CCB officials conducted raids under the Ramamurthy Nagar and HAL police station limits, where two foreign nationals and a child were rescued and placed under the Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO) protocol before being repatriated on January 16.

Raids in Bandepalaya and Sarjapur led to the arrest of four foreign nationals - three women and one man - who had obtained fraudulent Indian passports and PAN cards.

Purpose of the stay, under investigation

"We are investigating to determine the purpose of their visit. The Nepalese women rescued were found without passports, while the Ukrainian woman had tourist visas. Additionally, Bangladeshi women had crossed the border and obtained valid Indian IDs and passports. The FRRO is verifying their details, and once they are notified and set a date, we will hand over the rescued women to the Immigration Department," a CCB official told BM.

These back-to-back crackdowns highlight the growing issue of human trafficking in Bengaluru, where women, both foreign nationals and those from other Indian states, are being trapped in prostitution rings under false pretext.

Between May and October 2024, the CCB of Bengaluru, in collaboration with NGOs, rescued 11 minor girls aged 15 to 17 from trafficking and prostitution. Among them were three Bangladeshi nationals, with the remaining victims hailing from various Indian states, including West Bengal, Karnataka, Tripura, Maharashtra, and Punjab. Authorities arrested 26 individuals involved in the trafficking operations.

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Tow trouble round the corner?

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

operations were suspended following public outrage over reports of inhumane treatment of vehicle owners, particularly in the Indiranagar and Halasuru Gate areas. The situation was exacerbated by viral videos of incidents that led to the suspension order by then Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai.

Alternatives and concerns

In the absence of towing, police have been photographing vehicles parked in no-parking zones and sending notices to owners. However, some residents, like Surendra Gowda from JC Nagar, argue against the swift reintroduction of towing due to the prior allegations and complaints. He emphasised that the hired towing personnel were often rude, and instances of vehicle damage with no compensation were reported. Additionally, there were no clear warnings before towing actions were taken.

Average travel distance

Parameshwara said that Bengaluru faces a unique challenge in managing its traffic, with a population of 1.4 crore and 1.2 crore vehicles, translating to an average of four to five vehicles per household. The influx of vehicles from surrounding areas further complicates the issue.

Despite these challenges, Bengaluru's traffic management is among the best in the country. According to Dr. Parameshwara, Bengaluru's average travel distance per hour is 18.47 km, which is favourable when compared to cities like New Delhi (17.37 km), Kolkata (16.07 km), Mumbai (18.07 km), and Hyderabad (24.03 km). Even cities with better infrastructure, like Paris and Kuala Lumpur, struggle with traffic chaos, so Bengaluru's situation may not be as dire as it is often perceived, he said.

98.5% of B'luru to be concretised by 2025-end: Ways to go back to green

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Thanks to unplanned and irresponsible urbanisation, Bengaluru has almost become a dead city from a garden city.

Over the last five decades (between 1973 and 2023), the city has witnessed a 1,078% increase in paved surfaces and an 88% drop in vegetation cover. In 1973, nearly 70% of Bengaluru's geographical area was under green cover, which has now been reduced to less than 3%. Similarly, while the total built-up area 50 years ago was 7.97%, it has now gone up to 86.6%.

By the end of 2025, 98.5% of the city is expected to be concretised.

These are only some of the aspects discussed during a day-long seminar titled 'From Concrete to Canopy: Urban Forestry for Greener Cities' organised by the Institute of Wood Science and Technology (IWST) in association with Elixir Technologies, on Thursday. The seminar discussed the vital role that urban forests play in transforming concrete jungles into sustainable and livable environments.

Experts argue that urban forests not only improve air quality by sequestering carbon but also moderate microclimate, reduce urban heat island effect, and prevent soil erosion.

"Urban environment crisis is due to unplanned and irresponsible urbanization leading to loss of green cover and water bodies. Trees are important for improving air quality, maintaining oxygen levels, recharging groundwater, sustaining biodiversity, reducing the risk of flooding, and providing recreational areas. Creating ecological porous space through trees,

Total built-up area in city has gone up to 86.6%

parks and forests, wetlands and grasslands will also help us in the management of Bengaluru's water crisis," said Professor TV Ramachandra, Centre for Ecological Sciences, Indian Institute of Science (IISc).

"Environmental benefits from a medium-sized tree in 50 years include oxygen worth Rs 2.5 lakh, soil erosion control of Rs2.5 lakh, water infiltration worth Rs 3 lakh, control in air pollution equivalent to spending Rs 5 lakh," highlighted Ramachandra.

He further underlined that the water retention capability of the Cauvery Basin has gone down due to the loss of forest cover. Nearly 45% of forest cover in the basin has been depleted between 1965 and 2024 and currently, the total forest cover is less than 18%.

Dr. KN Murthy, retired IFS and Managing Director of Treelands Foundation, said that the urban green infrastructure should be looked at as a holistic system. Green patches should be interconnected throughout the city and should be part of the planning process.

"Urban trees are not being maintained currently. Every tree in the city should be visited at regular intervals and maintained. Moreover, buildings with glass facades should be directed to have vertical green cover using climbers, etc. to bring down the heating impact," said Dr Murthy.

Experts also said while there are various challenges in integrating trees into urban landscapes, nature-based solutions should be adopted to integrate green cover into city planning and urban design processes.

"As per WHO standards, every person should have 9 sq mt of urban green space; we should first aim at 10-12 sq km per capita green space as per Urban and Regional Development Plans Formulation and Implementation Guidelines. We should embrace urban design that works in harmony with nature, build habitats and ecological corridors to preserve biodiversity, increase tree cover, and restore wetlands in every area across the city," said Brinda Sastry, urban planner and designer.

State arms itself to curb microfinance menace

Cabinet proposes ordinance that will set in place strict guidelines to rein in illegal loan sharks

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With more cases of people falling prey to microfinance institutions, the state government has agreed to implement an ordinance aimed at preventing the misuse of microfinance. During a Cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Thursday, it was decided to seek the governor's approval for the ordinance.

The state has witnessed a surge in harassment cases. Recently, a woman from Malavalli, unable to bear the pressure from a microfinance company, took her own life. In another case, a 52-year-old man consumed poison after his house was seized by a microfinance company for defaulting on a loan. The man, identified as Andanaiah from Konnapura village in Malavalli taluk, succumbed to his injuries after days of treatment.

Home Minister G Parameshwara had earlier confirmed that the government is committed to tackling microfinance fraud. He urged affected borrowers to report cases directly to the police.

All District Commissioners (DCs) have been instructed to take immediate action. The government is also considering granting more authority to Deputy Commissioners of Police (DCPs) to deal with microfinance-related cases effectively. "We will not let go of this menace. Companies behaving like goons will face strict action. If they violate regulations, their licences will be revoked," said Parameshwara.

Police had said they are taking strict action against meter interest

"We will not let go of this menace. Companies behaving like goons will face strict action. If they violate regulations, their licences will be revoked –Dr G Parameshwara

Rising suicide cases

In Bettadapura, Periyapatna town, a man named Subramanya hanged himself after receiving a warning message from a finance company threatening to seize his home. A similar case was reported in Mysuru, where a woman named Sushila took her own life due to excessive pressure from loan recovery agents. Similar cases have surfaced in Belagavi, Tumakuru, Bengaluru, and Raichur.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, in a post on X reaffirmed the government's stance on the issue. " Forced recoveries without court approval are now prohibited. Lending beyond the borrower's repayment capacity will be under strict scrutiny. Any violation of RBI guidelines will result in penalties," he stated.

Patil told reporters they deliberated on the need for a law to prevent inhumane recovery practices. "When the poor are in extreme distress, microfinance organisations, moneylenders, and commission agents have caused chaos in the state by taking the law into their own hands. They send goons to the homes of struggling borrowers and, in some cases, even hold them under house arrest. Such inhuman actions are rampant, which is why we have decided to introduce a law that will completely put an end to this."

New police guidelines

During a press meet on Tuesday, Bengaluru police commissioner B Dayanada said that no case of harassment by microfinancing were reported in Bengaluru but however they were taking strict action against illegal meter interest.

"All the officers have been altered and sensitised to respond quickly and take appropriate action if any such incidents come to their notice since they have been reported in other parts of state," he said.

He said the other rules are: Writing on borrowers' houses is strictly prohibited; police stations are required to respond promptly to complaints from borrowers facing harassment.

"A list of companies violating RBI guidelines will be compiled for necessary action. Additionally, District Superintendents of Police (SPs) have been directed to meet with microfinance company heads and caution them against engaging in unlawful recovery practices. The police have also urged that victims of harassment should report cases via 112," he said.

New authority

To prevent similar incidents in the future, the government has proposed establishing a 'Registration Authority' to regulate the operations of microfinance institutions and moneylenders.

All microfinance companies operating within the state will be required to register, and any transactions conducted without registration could result in up to three years of imprisonment along with a fine of Rs 1 lakh. Additionally, companies found guilty of harassing borrowers will face a minimum imprisonment of six months, extendable up to three years, and a fine of Rs 1 lakh. The authority will also have the power to cancel the registration of institutions involved in malpractice. Registered companies must submit their transaction records by the 10th of every month.

Atrocity case: HC stays action

The High Court has issued a stay order on Wednesday on all proceedings in the case filed against Infosys co-founder S Krish Gopalakrishnan and 17 Indian Institute of Science (IISc) members. The case was registered under the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act following allegations by former professor D. Sanna Durgappa regarding unfair dismissal and discrimination based on caste.

Justice SR Krishna Kumar issued the interim order whilst hearing the petition submitted by Gopalkrishna and others requesting to nullify the case registered against them.

The Court stated: "Accepting the reasons stated in the application duly filed along with memorandum of facts, I.A.No.1/2025 is allowed. In the meanwhile, all further proceedings/investigation in Crime No.17/2025 of Sadashivanagara Police station and all further proceedings in P.C.R. No.1/2025 on the file of the LXX Addl. City Civil and Sessions Judge and Special Judge, Bengaluru insofar as the petitioners are concerned, are hereby stayed till the next date of hearing."

The FIR includes several IISc faculty members: Govindan Rangarajan, Sridhar Warrier, Sandya Vishwswaraih, Hari K V S, Dasappa, Balaram P, Hemalata Mhishi, Chattopadyaya K, Pradeep D Sawkar, and Manoharan. –BMB

Reserved: City's last grassland

After the State Board of Wildlife's approval in October 2024 to declare 5,000 acres of Bengaluru's Hesaraghatta grassland as a conservation reserve, the proposal received a final official stamp on Thursday. The state cabinet has endorsed the proposal to declare the grassland as the greater Hesaraghatta grassland conservation reserve.

This decision will minimise human interference and conserve its rich biodiversity. It will also protect one of the last remaining open spaces in the city from severe pressures from human activities, such as unregulated vehicular movement, sand mining, hunting, and tree plantations.

The state government is now expected to constitute a conservation reserve management committee to advise the Chief Wild Life Warden to conserve, manage, and maintain the reserve. –BMB

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I, Harish Srinivasa Rao, s/o Srinivasa Rao, R/o No-20 Flat No-103 5th cross 1st Main Kathriguppe BSK 1ST Stage B'luru-560085 have changed my name to M S HARISH for all Purposes.

I Man Singh,S/o.Rag Singh, R/o. No 1303,16th B Cross,Chikkabommasandra Cross,Yelahanka New Town,Bengaluru - 560064,Informed that in my pan card my father's name wrongly mentioned as Raghu Singh Rathore however his correct name is Rag Singh.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Anjali Rudresh, d/o Jaganatha K S, r/at Seetha Bunglow, Dasawala Road, Madikeri, Kodagu District, have changed my name to **Anjali K Jaganatha** for all future purposes vide affidavit dt. 15.02.2021 sworn before Notary Sivakumara M N, Bangalore.

I, Sowbhagya Ashok, R/a. # No. 242, 4th Main, 1st Stage, KHB Colony, Basaveshwara Nagar, Bangalore-560079, have changed my name to Sowbhagya Renukacharya for future purpose

I, Rekha Mariyappa W/o Shiva Prasad P V R/o No.257/1, new 4206/1, 2nd B main, Girinagar, 4th phase, Bengaluru 560085 have changed my name to Rekha Prasad Affidavit Dt.30/01/2025 notary Harisha G, B'luru

I, Mehraj Ahmad Tanki R/o Flat 1204 block 12 prestige kew gardens yemalur B'lore 560037 have changed my minor son's name from Muhammad to Muhammad Tanki for all purposes.

I Diwakar Samuel Jayaraj S/O, Jayaraj Samuel Peterson R/o No 3 Bore Bank Pottery Road, Frazer Town, Bengaluru - 560046 have changed my name to Diwakar Sandhi Poggu Jayaraj.

I, Rajani D/o Prabhakar R, R/o No.52/1, 2nd Floor, 4th cross, Swastik Road, Shanthinagar, Bengaluru 560027 have changed my name to Rajani Prabhakar Affidavit Dt.30/01/2025 notary Harisha G, B'luru

I, Aarthi Ponprakash R/O No 663, Flat No D F2, 1st floor, 15th Main, Vyalikaval HBCS Layout, Verrannapalya, Nagwara, Bangalore-560045. I changed my name from Aarthi to Aarthi Ponprakash for all future purposes

I, Gunavathi Iragam W/o V Swamy Reddy R/o No.34, 6th cross, 11th main, Srinivasa layout, Hongasandra Bengaluru 560068 have changed my name to Gunavathi Valasareddy (V Gunavathi) Affidavit Dt.30/01/2025 notary Harisha G, B'luru

I, Perumal Ponprakash R/O No 663, Flat No D F2, 1st floor,15th Main, Vyalikaval HBCS Layout, Verrannapalya, Nagwara, Bangalore-560045. I changed my minor child name from Pon Prakash Rohanvaibhav to Ponprakash Kavin Adhithya for all future purposes

I Ravikant Thakur S/O, Ramesh Chand R/o A007, Saibya Sundew Begur Koppa Road Tejaswini Nagar 560076 have changed my name to Ravi Kant.

I, Bhawana Datta, d/o Vimal Kumar Datta, R/o E-103, Jalvayu Heights Apt, HMT Main Road, Jalahalli, Bengaluru-560013 have changed my name to Bhawna Dutta for all Purposes.

I, Perumal Ponprakash R/O No 663, Flat No D F2, 1st floor, 15th Main, Vyalikaval HBCS Layout, Verrannapalya, Nagwara, Bangalore- 560045. I changed my name from Pon Prakash to Perumal Ponprakash for all future purposes

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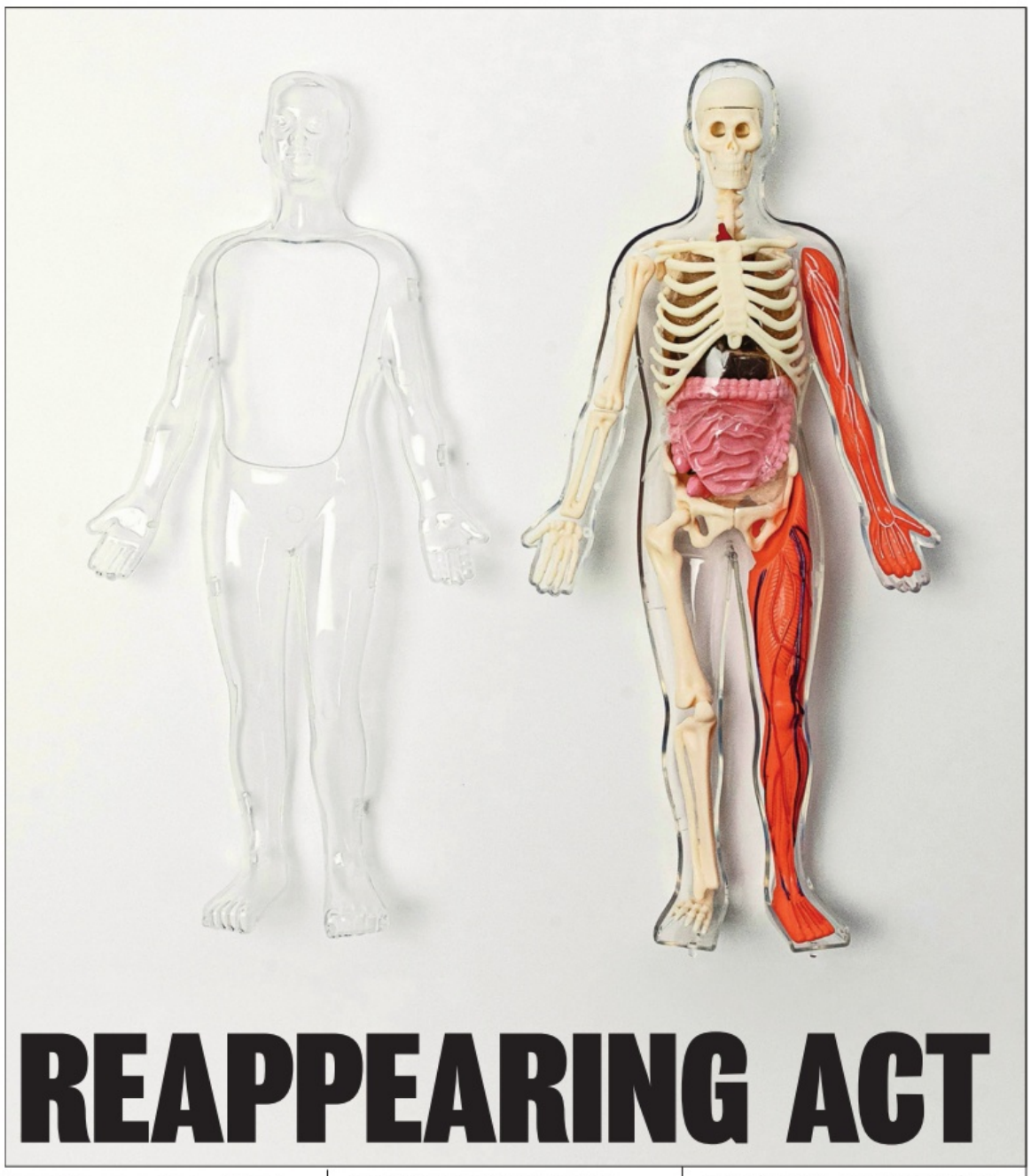


REAPPEARING ACT

Tonsils can grow back after they've been removed – here's which other body parts can regenerate

The human body is composed of over 37 trillion cells, each with a limited lifespan. These cells are continuously replaced to maintain organ and system function. Yet over time, or as a result of damage, the number of functioning cells can decrease to a level that causes symptoms or even organ failure.

Regeneration of organs and systems is a scientific holy grail that relies on stem cells, but due to their limited number and slow division rate, this isn't a practical route to organ regeneration. It would take many years to repopulate all the cell types needed.

However, some people see organs "reappear", like Katy Golden who had her tonsils removed for a second time as an adult after they grew back over 40 years.

One reason that tonsils may grow back is that one of the operations to remove them is a partial tonsillectomy. Only removing part of the tonsils leads to a quicker recovery and fewer complications, but around 6% of children may see regrowth, which may require further surgery in later life.

Most people associate organ regrowth and regeneration with the liver. As little as 10% of the liver can regrow into a fully functioning liver. This is also how partial liver transplants allow the donor to "regrow" a normal sized and fully functioning liver.

One organ that has a surprising capacity to regenerate is the spleen and sometimes it can regenerate without people realising.

The spleen is a high-risk organ for injury and is the most commonly injured organ in blunt abdominal trauma during traffic collisions, sporting injuries or trivial activities such as bumping into furniture.

The spleen is at high risk because it has lots of blood vessels and hence lots of blood, but is only surrounded by a thin capsule that can tear in trauma, allowing blood to leak out. This can result in death if not treated promptly.

What may also happen is small pieces of the spleen – sometimes just a few cells – can become free in the abdomen and go on to "grow" where they settle – termed splenosis, going on to have similar functional activity to a mature, normally located spleen. This can be beneficial for those who have to have their spleen removed due to traumatic injury, with some reports suggesting regeneration in up to 66% of patients.

In the last few years, our lungs have also been shown to have regenerative capacity. It is well known that smoking and other pollutants destroy the alveoli (tiny air sacs) where oxygen is passed to the blood. Stopping smoking has been shown to allow cells that have avoided damage from the cancer-causing chemicals in tobacco smoke to help regenerate and repopulate the lining of parts of the airways with healthy cells.

Where a lung has been removed, the remaining lung has to adapt to support the tissues of the body and ensure enough oxygen gets to them. Studies have shown that the remaining lung increases the number of alveoli it has, rather than the remaining alveoli compensating by getting bigger to take up more oxygen.

It isn't just organs inside that regenerate. One organ that constantly does so on a humongous scale is the skin.

As the largest organ, it has multiple barrier functions to keep things such as water in and germs out. With a surface area of almost 2m², the skin requires a significant amount of regeneration to replenish the 500,000,000 cells that are lost each day – that's over 2g of skin cells per day.

Tissue regeneration is much more common

One of the most active regenerative tissues is the endometrial lining of the uterus which is shed every 28 days as part of the menstrual cycle and goes through about 450 cycles of this during a woman's life.

This layer varies between 0.5 and 18mm in thickness depending on the stage of the menstrual cycle, the functional cells that are lost along with the blood from vessels that support a fertilised egg if it implants.

Men's genitalia can also show regeneration. Vasectomy, which removes a piece of the tube (vas deferens) connecting the testes to the openings in the urethra, is used to reduce the chance of pregnancy by preventing sperm moving from the testes out of the penis.

However, the cut ends of the ducts have shown regenerative capacity and reconnected. Some sections, where up to 5cm has been restricted or removed, have shown regeneration, even through scar tissue. This "recanalisation" can result in unexpected pregnancies.

Bone is another tissue that can regenerate. If you've ever broken a bone, you'll know that it repairs so that (eventually) you will regain function.

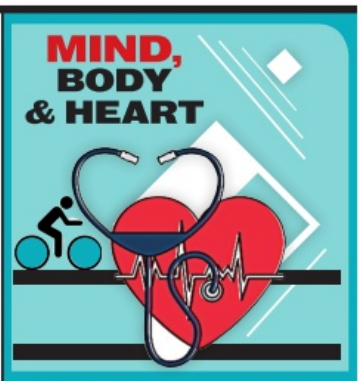
This process of repairing the break takes six to eight weeks. But the process of regenerating the bone architecture and strength continues for months and years beyond this date.

However, with increasing age and in post-menopausal woman, this process slows and the bone may not regenerate to its previous strength or structure.

Where paired organs exist and one is lost, there is good evidence that the remaining organ can increase its functional ability to help the body cope with maintaining function. For example, when one kidney is removed, the remaining kidney enlarges to handle the extra workload, filtering blood and eliminating waste efficiently.

Although organ regeneration is rare, it does happen and typically takes years to manifest because organs are complex structures. Work continues to try to understand how scientists can develop this knowledge to help with the shortage of donor organs. Thankfully, tissue regeneration happens much more often than many people might suppose, and it is a much-needed part of staying alive.

(By Adam Taylor, Lancaster University, The Conversation)



All you need to know about...

Talking to kids

Communication is key
"Effective communication with children is the key to creating healthy relationships," advises Dr. Pallavi Rao Chaturvedi, Parenting coach who feels that children pick up on certain concepts and seek solutions that are crucial to be addressed through their everyday experiences and dialogues. Some of them are:

Life And Death
Children frequently inquire, "How was I born?" Or, "what occurs when a person dies?" Instead of providing evasive answers, parents should take a pragmatic approach in order to help their children comprehend the notion of birth and death. They must explain that birth and death are two sides of the same coin and basic life cycles.

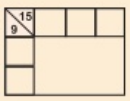
Anatomy
Interacting with acquaintances and individuals of the other gender arouses curiosity regarding their differences in height, weight, colour, etc. Parents can address this issue by utilising animated visuals that illustrate how everyone is unique and perfect in their own way. Using charts, narratives, and age-appropriate movies, the concept of gender can also be conveyed simply and scientifically.

Religion
Children are very curious about God and the reasons why people adhere to various religions. In a multicultural nation such as India, children have classmates and friends from various religious backgrounds. Parents can teach their children about the unique significance of each faith through storytelling and basic religious texts; however, humanity should come first, and children should treat everyone with equal love and respect, regardless of religion.

Finances
Very early in development, children encounter individuals from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds. Observing people seeking alms on the road might sometimes provoke reflection, as can encountering someone with more possessions. Parents may teach their children about being content with what they have and assisting those in need. — **Femina**

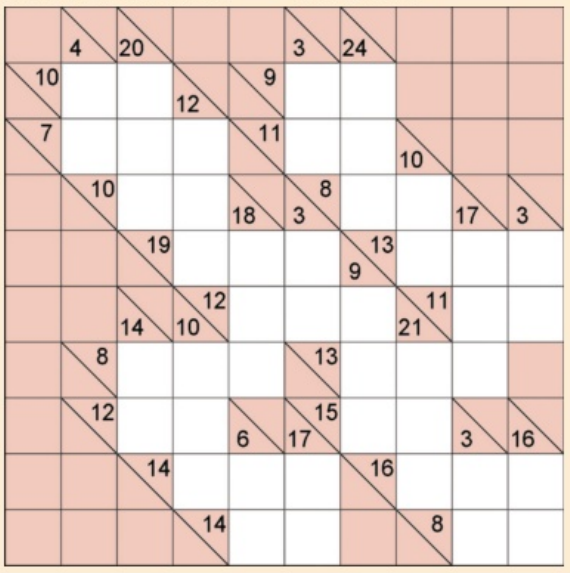
Kakuro

The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas

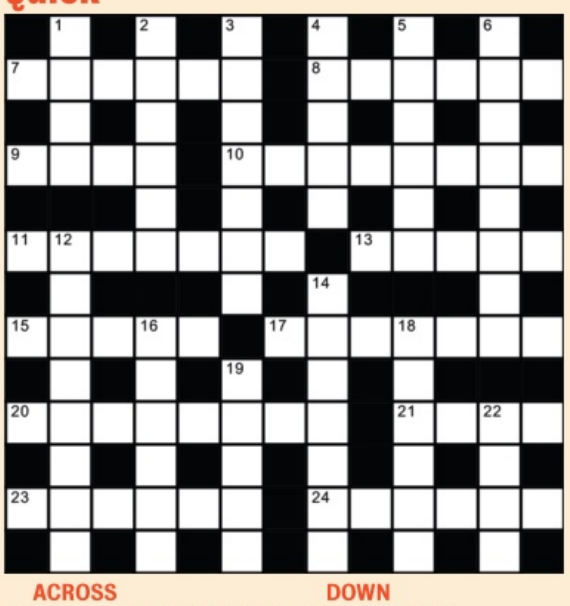


for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.

Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

7 West ____ : state in Eastern India? (6)
8 Capital of Manipur (6)
9 Greenish blue (4)
10 Distinguished fighters (8)
11 Truly or honourably (7)
13 Suffering or torture (5)
15 A division of time (5)
17 Makes a bid for (7)
20 Strayed off (8)
21 Fair to middlin' (2-2)
23 Uses a loom (6)
24 Gave up intentionally (6)

DOWN

1 Contradict (4)
2 Programme of business (6)
3 Malice (3-4)
4 Log (5)
5 Natural well (6)
6 Sons and Lovers author D. H. ____ (8)
12 Offended grossly (8)
14 Computer operating system (7)
16 Karnataka lake home to a bird sanctuary (6)
18 Seize an advantage, in a way? (4,2)
19 Recently made (5)
22 Plant the lawn (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: I EQUALS G

U YDAF VFAFB SFO D SDV NQ UIVQBDVO OYDO U ZQJGHV'O GFDBV NQSFOYUVI TBQS YUS.

Linemaro

When I saw you I realised, finally, that reality is better than dreams

Mindchow

A man who preaches is most impressive when he acts as if he were fighting bees

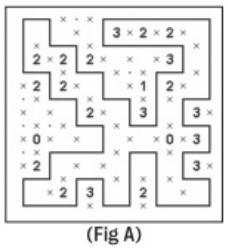
Joke of the day

Programming today is a race between software engineers striving to build bigger and better idiot-proof programs, and the universe trying to build bigger and better idiots. So far, the universe is winning

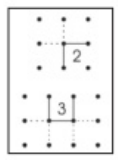
Loop

Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.



(Fig A)

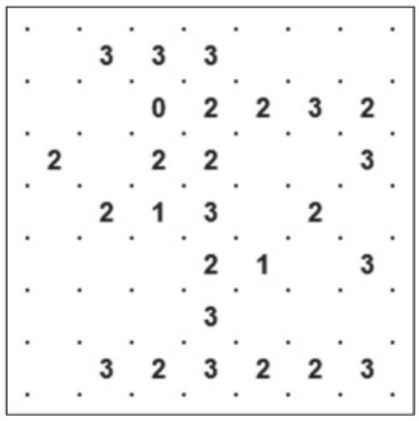


(Fig B) Not Allowed

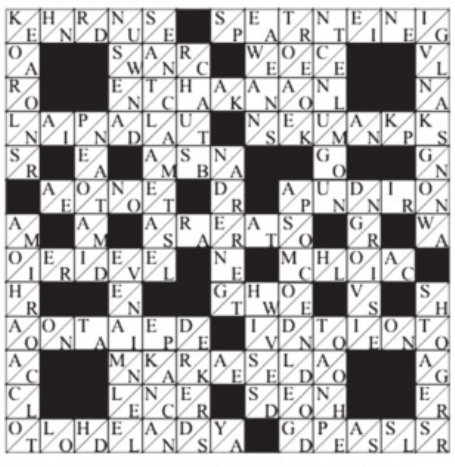
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...

1	2	3	4	5
6				
7				
8				
9				Y

ACROSS

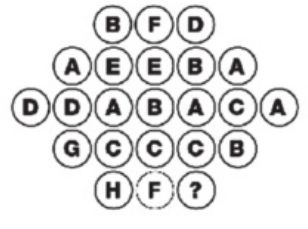
1 A cape; 6 Burin;
7 N rays; 8 Hacks;
9 Shy MU

DOWN

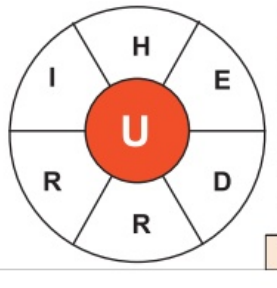
1 By SAM; 2 Rah up;
3 Asura; 4 C chin;
5 N Keys

Mensapuzzle

Which of the lower circles replace the question mark to complete the puzzle?



Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

02 Average; 03 Good; 04 Outstanding

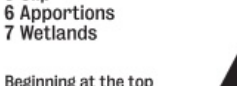
SudokuChallenge

	1	4						
9				7				
	7	5		3	8	9		
	2				6			
7	9	6				3	8	4
			4				1	
		7	6	1		4	5	
				5				7
						8	6	

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.



Easy: ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ = 14
4 5 6 7

Medium: ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ = 10
9 5 2 1

Hard: ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ = 12
1 3 8 2

Hocusfocus

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

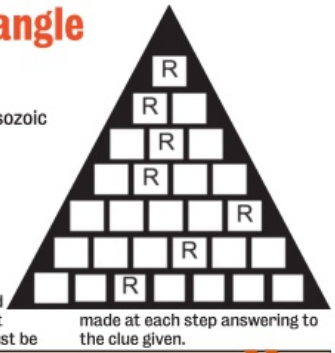
Differences: 1. Sleeve is longer. 2. Arm is longer. 3. Hair is different. 4. Part of collar is missing. 5. Bookcase is taller. 6. Box is longer.

Riddler

Fill in the blanks with letters from the Roman numerals.
1) a_ _ _e _o_u_n_st (Dear Abby),
2) _e_ _ B. _e_ _ _ _e (famed director),
3) _ _ _ _e _an_ _us_ _ (hot jazz),
4) _nse_t_ _ _ _a_ (bug killing),
5) _e_ _e_a_ _e_ _ _ ne (often used leeches)

Alpha triangle

1 Right letter
2 Concerning
3 Have being
4 Paleozoic and Mesozoic
5 Clip
6 Apportions
7 Wetlands

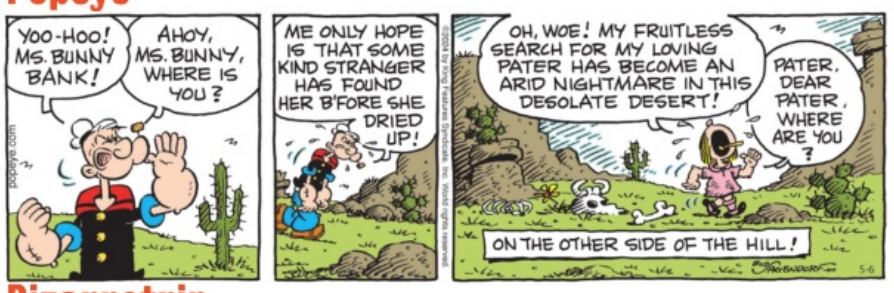


Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE »

COMICS

Popeye


YOO-HOO! MS. BUNNY BANK!
AHOY, MS. BUNNY, WHERE IS YOU?
ME ONLY HOPE IS THAT SOME KIND STRANGER HAS FOUND HER B'FORE SHE DRIED UP!
OH, WOE! MY FRUITLESS SEARCH FOR MY LOVING PATER HAS BECOME AN ARID NIGHTMARE IN THIS DESOLATE DESERT!
PATER, DEAR PATER, WHERE ARE YOU?
ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE HILL!

Bizarrotrip

Diamond Lil

I'VE DONE IT! THE TRANSPLANT IS SUCCESSFUL!
CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP
WE WILL RETURN TO "FRANKENSTEIN GETS A BIG HAND"
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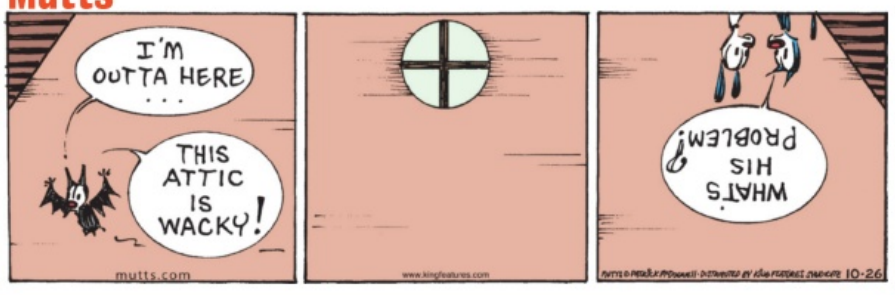
www.creators.com
BARTLETT

Hart of the city

HEYYYY, I HEAR YOU'RE GOING TO THE "MAMMA MIA!" DOUBLE FEATURE.
MY FRIEND AND I NEED TO BE SNUCK IN. CAN WE GO WITH YOU?
WE'LL BUY SNACKS.
WAIT, WHAT?
HART OF THE CITY © 2024 ANDREWS MCMEEL
@COMICS.COM/HEARTOFTHECITY

Crankshaft

Mutts



WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
Today, the moon's negative influence may leave you feeling dull. It's essential to remain calm and think carefully before taking any action. If you're travelling to recover money, exercise caution to avoid financial loss. You must avoid adventurous activities, and students are advised to focus on in-depth studies for success.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
Today, you are blessed by a positive moon; you may feel content and enjoy harmony at home. Your performance at work is likely to be excellent, possibly earning you rewards or promotions. An influential person might help you gain work-related benefits. Disputes over inherited property may also be resolved.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
Today, a positive moon blesses you with good health and a focused mindset. Your performance at work may excel, impressing your superiors and earning you key responsibilities. You can expect favourable news in legal matters. You are likely to maintain control over competitors and business rivals.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
Intellectual pursuits may take centre stage today. You might deepen your knowledge and appreciate the value of intellectual assets. Controlling your temper can help you accomplish tasks smoothly. Smooth earnings may bring comfort, but exercise caution with new investments. Lovebirds may share joyful moments, and spending on loved ones is likely.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
Today, the moon's negative influence may bring feelings of negativity and overwhelm you. Responsibilities could feel burdensome, and rushing to complete tasks may result in mistakes. Slow work efficiency may lead to project delays. You are advised to seek advice from elders before making significant decisions.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
Today, with the moon's blessings, good news from siblings may uplift your spirits. Spending quality time with family and friends could bring joy. Creativity might inspire you to renovate your home or office. Starting partnerships with family members can prove beneficial. Support from subordinates may help in completing office projects.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
Today, the positive moon brings happiness and peace of mind. You may work efficiently and find support from subordinates in making important business decisions. Collaborating with siblings or your network on a new venture could boost business growth. Ensure you get enough rest to maintain your enthusiasm.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
Today, the moon may bring mixed outcomes. Planning for higher studies could benefit your career. Lovebirds might feel confused about their emotions, and high expectations could strain your relationship with your spouse. You are advised to take care of your parents and focus on academic or professional goals.

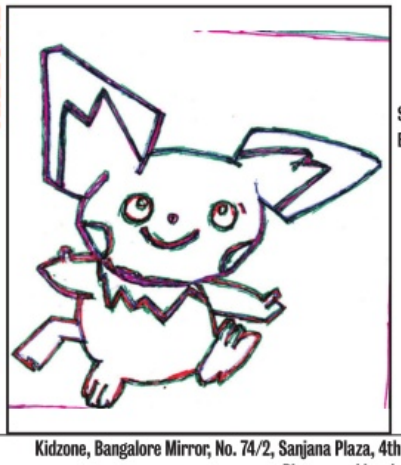
Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
Today, a negative moon may cause detachment from responsibilities. Overspending on unnecessary items might bring negativity to your environment. You must keep a close watch on opponents and rivals to avoid falling victim to conspiracy. You are also advised to review documents thoroughly before signing anything.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
Today is a good day. The moon's blessings bring joy to both domestic and professional life. Politeness towards those around you may smoothen your tasks. New income sources could boost your savings. Renovation plans for your house or office may also take shape.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
Today's positive moon brings rewards for your hard work and an increase in social respect. However, overworking your mind could leave you fatigued, possibly preventing you from attending a family event. Things are getting better; chronic health issues in your parents may show signs of improvement now.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
Today, you are blessed with satisfaction at work. A short work-related trip or a visit to a religious place may help you maintain inner peace. Elders could provide valuable guidance, offering clarity about your goals. Students are advised to focus on their studies to achieve their goals.

KIDZONE



S Sathvik, Bengaluru

JANANI V, Bengaluru

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011;
Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M
(¼ / ½)/ ¼
2 / ¼
8

BULL'S EYE
hued, HURRIED, rude, ruder

FAST FIVE

M	U	S	H	Y
S	H	A	C	K
Y	A	R	N	S
B	R	U	I	N
A	P	A	C	E

RIDDLER
1) advice columnist,
2) Cecil B Demille,
3) Dixieland music,
4) insecticidal,
5) medieval medicine

STRIKE OUT

E	N	D	U	E	P	A	T	T	I	N	G			
A		S	A	C		W	O	E		L				
R		E	T	H	A	N	O	L		A				
L	A	N	D	A	U		S	K	U	N	K	S		
S		A		M	B	A		G			G			
A	O	N	E		R		A	U	D	I	O			
M	M		A	R	E	A	S		R		W			
O	R	I	E	L		N		C	H	I	G			
R		N		T	H	E		V		S				
O	N	T	A	P	E		I	N	T	E	N	T		
C		M	A	K	E	S	D	O			A			
	E	C	E		S	E	N				R			
C														
O	L	D	L	A	D	Y		D	E	A	L	S		

QUICK

D	A		I		H		S		L					
B	E	N	G	A	L		I	M	P	H	A	L		
	N		E		L		A		R		W			
C	Y	A	N		W	A	R	I	O	R	S			
L	O	Y	A	L	T	Y		A	G	O	N	Y		
		D		I		Y		N		E				
		C			L		W							
S	T	A	G	E		P	I	T	C	H	E	S		
			A		N		F		N		R			
S	O	S		D	E	R	E	D		H	E			
W	A	N	D	E	R		O		E		G			
	W	A	I	V	E	D								
A		S	E	N										
R														
W														
A														
D														

ALPHA TRIANGLE
R, Ra, Are, Eras, Shear, Shares, Marshes.

GO FIGURE
Easy
6 – 4 + 7 + 5 = 14
Medium
9 – 5 + 1 x 2 = 10
Hard
2 x 8 – 3 – 1 = 12

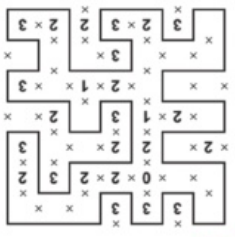
SUDOKU

3	1	4	9	6	5	2	7	8
9	6	8	2	7	4	5	3	1
2	7	5	1	3	8	9	4	6
4	2	1	3	8	6	7	9	5
5	8	3	4	9	7	6	1	2
7	9	6	5	2	1	3	8	4
8	3	7	6	1	2	4	5	9
6	4	9	8	5	3	1	2	7
1	5	2	7	4	9	8	6	3

MENSA PUZZLE
F, Working in rows, from top to bottom, the sum of the numerical values of the letters in each row starts at 12, and increases by 2 as you go down each row.

QUOTE UNCODE
I have never met a man so ignorant that I couldn't learn something from him.

LOOP



KAKURO

Volume No 18, Issue No 023 RNI NO:KARENG/2007/21142 Published for the Proprietors, Metropolitan Media Company Ltd by R.J. Prakashan at No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011 and printed by him at Bennett Coleman & Co Ltd., The Times of India Press, No. 9/10/11-A, 4th Main, KIADB Bommasandra Industrial Area, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore–560 099 (Phones : Press : 080-22899999; Editorial : 080-40877666, Fax – 40877545, Registered Office: No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru–560 011, Email : mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com Editor : Ms. Seena Menon–responsible for selection of news under PRB Act. © Reproduction in whole or in part without the written permission of the Publisher is prohibited.

MILES TO GO

Pooja Hegde reflects on her journey so far and plans ahead

With the perfect blend of acting talent and beauty, Pooja Hegde has worked with some of the finest filmmakers and biggest stars. However, the sought-after actress feels that while she has come a long way, she still has a long way to go. Pooja started her acting journey in 2012 with the Tamil film Mugamoodi directed by Mysskin. She made her Bollywood debut opposite Hrithik Roshan in the 2016 film "Mohenjo Daro".

Ever since then she has worked with big names such as Allu Arjun, Mahesh Babu, Prabhas, Hrithik Roshan, Salman Khan, Ram Charan and Ranveer Singh. She will next be seen in "Deva" starring Shahid Kapoor.

Asked with a filmography filled with great directors and co-stars, does she feel she has made it?

Pooja told IANS: "I mean, I've made it far, quite far, but a long way to go in my mind. I don't think I want to put that pressure in my mind of making it or not. But yes, I have been here and still standing going strong."

The 34-year-old actress said that she never thought she would be an actress. "So, for someone like me coming from a non-filmy family, I never thought that I would be an actor. And I didn't even think that this was a possibility that I could be an actor. Like because I come from a very academically driven family. You know, my parents have both done law and they've done the MBA.

"My mom has done her master's in law. My brother's an orthopedic surgeon."

Pooja says she is happy to be in the world of cinema. "So in this family to be born and eventually pursue acting, when I even used to watch films, I never thought I could be that person or that girl. But I'm just so happy to be here doing what I love doing. And I have a long way to go." She added: "I have so many roles that I haven't played. There are so many filmmakers I want to work with. So just continuing for the love of cinema."

The actress now looks forward to the release of "Deva", an action thriller directed by Rosshan Andrrews. The film also stars Pavail Gulati. It is slated to release on January 31.

—IANS

Manifesting her dreams

Actress Richa Chadha, in her first post for 2025, wrote about her 2011 dream journal, where one of her key goals was to "convince Sanjay Bhansali to cast her.

Reflecting on how far she's come, she shared how this dream became a reality when she got to perform as Lajjo under Bhansali's direction "Heeramandi", checking that dream off her list.

On Thursday, Richa took to her Instagram handle and shared a couple of photos featuring herself, actor husband Ali Fazal and their newborn baby.

Alongside it, the actress penned a lengthy note where she opened up about her personal milestones, expressing her joy at birthing a "beautiful daughter" and producing her first film under the banner of "Girls Will Be Girls."

Chadha wrote, "This is my first post of 2025. I was journaling... What a year it's been, from being able to perform Lajjo with maestro

and check that off the list of dreams... birthing a beautiful daughter and our first film as producers!"

—IANS

Super excited

Shahid Kapoor's forthcoming action entertainer, "Deva" is one of the most anticipated films of 2025. Pavail Gulatie, who is also playing an important role in the film recently shared his excitement about the drama during the trailer launch event.

Sharing insights into the film's intensity, Pavail Gulatie said, "Honestly, this is one of my biggest films till date. It's because of Siddharth sir, Rosshan sir, Shahid Kapoor, and Pooja Hegde. I'm really excited. I was damn excited to be a part of this film, and thank you for having me in

this film. Every scene in the film is filled with intensity. It's Shahid and Rosshan sir's fantastic vision."

Talking about his bromance with Shahid Kapoor, Pavail Gulatie revealed, "Our bromance on-screen was fantastic because we got along very well off-screen."

On the other hand, Shahid Kapoor also shared his experience of working on "Deva". The 'Kabir Singh' actor stated, "Deva is a piece of my heart. For many years, people were telling me to do a massy film, something that resonates with the masses. For me, this is the next step in my journey. It's been one of the most challenging films of my career."

"Deva" will feature Shahid Kapoor and Pavail Gulatie in the roles of police officers.

—IANS

Rihanna in court

Rihanna appeared for the first time at the trial of her longtime partner A$AP Rocky, on the day of its most important testimony — the description by a former friend of the moment Rocky allegedly fired a gun at him. The singer superstar, who has two toddler sons with the rapper Rocky, sat out of view of the courtroom's cameras, between Rocky's mother and sister, in the downtown Los Angeles criminal courthouse. Security brought her into the courtroom surreptitiously to avoid crowds Wednesday morning.

Rocky, whose legal name is Rakim Athelston Mayers, has been standing trial on two felony charges that he fired a handgun at the former friend, who is known by the name A$AP Relli and was born Terell Ephron. If convicted, Rocky could get up to 24 years in prison.

Rihanna watched Wednesday as Relli testified about the moment Rocky allegedly fired a gun at him on a Hollywood street in 2021.

He had been shouting angrily at Rocky, who was walking away after an initial confrontation, when Rocky pulled a gun from his waistband and held it in the air, Relli testified.

"He turned around and then it was like BOOM!" he told the jury. "The whole thing was like a movie, he kind of like pointed down and he shot the first shot."

He said "I felt my hand hot" and later added, "I was hit. Or I was grazed. I didn't have a hole or nothing."

—AP

SANDALWOOD SHOTS
Y MAHESWARA REDDY

Six elements

Nagavalli Bangale is set to join the list of movies in Sandalwood where content is king. The team unveiled the poster and teaser of the movie that is set to arrive in theaters on February 28.

On the occasion, script and dialogue writer BM Prahlad said the movie is about the six elements – desire, anger, greed, ego, attachment, and jealousy – and six characters in the movie represent the six elements. "Six actresses play these characters representing six elements," Prahlad said.

Appreciating Prahlad for the good script and dialogues, director Kavi Rajesh recalled how producer NL Mahesh readily agreed to bankroll it when Prahlad narrated the script. "I thank producer Mahesh for making arrangements for this movie to go on floors within five days of our meeting. The movie belongs to the horror genre but it does not have ghosts," he said.

Incidents of a night

The team members of Anamadheya Ashok Kumar are happy with the response for the teaser and the trailer of the movie. They plan to release the movie on February 7 across the state. The movie is bankrolled by Nirmala Kumar and Ramya Sagar Kumar, in association with actor Kishore Kumar, under the SKN Films banner. Kishore Kumar and Achar & Co fame Harshil Kaushik are playing important characters in the movie. Sagar Kumar is the director.

"I am a software engineer and have made a few short films. The movie is about incidents that take place in the city between 6 pm and 6 am. The movie revolves around the murder of a well-known advocate. I wrote the script for this movie. Benni Thomas and I wrote the screenplay. Kishore Kumar plays a journalist while Harshil Kaushik plays a police inspector," said Sagar Kumar.

"Sudheendra Nair, Kantharaj Kaddipudi, and Veeresh also played important characters in the movie," he said.

Kishore Kumar said he agreed to act in the movie as the script is interesting. "Anamadheya means a person without a name (nameless). The director has not revealed who the nameless Ashok Kumar is. You will have to watch the film to find out," said Kishore Kumar.